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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2008, at 1 p.m.

Senate

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2008

(Legislative day of Wednesday, September 17, 2008)

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God of new beginnings, as our Nation greets the dawn of fresh opportunities and daunting challenges, inspire the Members of this body to trust Your sovereignty. May they remember the words of the 75th Psalm, declaring that You place leaders in positions of authority.

As we pray for our outgoing and incoming Senators, help them to place their ultimate trust in You, the author and finisher of destinies.

Today we also pray for our Government's executive branch. Sustain our President in the remaining days of his administration. Sustain also the President-elect, Barack Obama. Give him the integrity of Joseph, the faith of Moses, and the wisdom of Solomon. Prepare him to mobilize the branches of our Government toward shared objectives that honor Your name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JON TESTER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 17, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JON TESTER, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. TESTER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER FOR MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and the remarks of Senator MCCONNELL, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I, of course, welcome everyone back for what we hope to be a short period of time before Thanksgiving. We, of course, have completed this election. We still have three Senate contests where we are waiting to get the results. One of them should be decided in the next few days, the one in Alaska; the one in Georgia will be decided on December 2; and the one in Minnesota will take, I am told, a month or 6 weeks. In that race they have 3 million hand ballots, and Minnesota is going to count every one of them. So that is going to take a while.

In the summer of 1858, a young State legislator from Illinois accepted his party's nomination for the Senate with a timeless speech that echoed from coast to coast. That speech has been recited many times. He said:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." . . . I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

That is what he said. One hundred fifty years later, a young Senator from the land of Lincoln stood on the very same steps on which Abraham Lincoln stood to announce his pursuit of his party's nomination for President by calling upon our country to not just believe in his ability to change Washington but to believe in what we can do together if we set aside what divides us and embrace a common purpose.

Over the past 21 months, Barack Obama has had a message of hope much like Abraham Lincoln's which has spread across this country like a tidal

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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